

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Previously Presented) A method for managing mail/parcel item delivery, the mail/parcel item including an optical indicia disposed thereon, the method comprising:
 - capturing a first color image of an item;
 - storing the first color image in an electronic memory;
 - capturing a second color image of an optical indicia;
 - decoding the optical indicia to thereby generate decoded data;
 - associating the first color image with the second color image and/or the decoded data, the first color image and the second color image and/or the decoded data being linked in the electronic memory; and
 - displaying an image including the first color image and at least the decoded data.

2. (Previously Presented) A method for managing parcel delivery, a parcel including at least one optical indicia disposed thereon, the method comprising:
 - providing a hand held optical reader, said hand held optical reader capable of capturing a color image and capable of performing all of the following steps A, B, C, and D;
 - providing a database;
 - providing a network configured to enable storage of information communicated from said hand held optical reader to said database;
 - capturing a first color image of a parcel using said hand held optical reader;
 - performing at least one of the following steps A, B, C, or D using said hand held reader:
 - (A) attempting to locate and decode a bar code symbol located within said first color image to generate a first data set; and if successful, associating said first color image with said first data set;
 - (B) attempting to locate and decode one or more OCR-A or OCR-B characters within said first color image to generate a second data set, and if successful, associating said first color image with said second data set;

(C) attempting to locate and crop one or more text characters within said first color image to generate a third data set, and if successful, associating said first color image with said third data set;

(D) attempting to locate and crop a signature within said first color image to generate a fourth data set, and if successful, associating said first color image with said fourth data set;

storing said first color image and at least one said first, second, third or fourth data sets into said database;

storing a first association between said first color image and at least one said first, second, third or fourth data sets into said database;

storing information representing a route into said database, where said parcel is delivered in association with said route;

storing a route association between said first color image and said route into said database;

storing information representing a driver into said database, where said parcel is delivered in association with said driver;

storing a driver association between said first color image and said driver into said database.

3. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 2, including the step of displaying an image including said first color image and at least one of said first, second, third or fourth data sets.

4. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 2, including the step of printing an image including said first color image and at least one of said first, second, third or fourth data sets.

5. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 2, ~~where~~ wherein said first color image and at least one of said first, second, third or fourth data sets are stored as a record in said database.

6. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 2, ~~where~~ wherein at least one of said first, route and driver associations are stored as links within said database.
7. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 2 ~~where~~ wherein at least one of said bar code, said OCR-A or OCR-B characters, said text characters or said signature is stored as a second color image.
8. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 6 7, ~~where~~ wherein an association between said second color image and said first data set is stored as a link within said database.
9. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 6 7, ~~where~~ wherein an association between said second color image and said second data set is stored as a link within said database.
10. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 6 7, ~~where~~ wherein an association between said second color image and said third data set is stored as a link within said database.
11. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 6 7, ~~where~~ wherein an association between said second color image and said fourth data set is stored as a link within said database.
12. (Previously Presented) A method for managing parcel delivery, a parcel including at least one optical indicia disposed thereon, the method comprising:
 - providing a hand held optical reader, said hand held optical reader capable of capturing an image and capable of performing all of the following steps A, B, C, and D;
 - providing a database;
 - providing a network configured to enable storage of information communicated from said hand held optical reader to said database;
 - capturing a first image of a parcel using said hand held optical reader;

performing at least one of the following steps A, B, C, or D using said hand held reader:

(A) attempting to locate and decode a bar code symbol located within said first image to generate a first data set; and if successful, associating said first image with said first data set;

(B) attempting to locate and decode one or more OCR-A or OCR-B characters within said first image to generate a second data set, and if successful, associating said first image with said second data set;

(C) attempting to locate and crop one or more text characters within said first image to generate a third data set, and if successful, associating said first image with said third data set;

(D) attempting to locate and crop a signature within said first image to generate a fourth data set, and if successful, associating said first image with said fourth data set; storing said first image and at least one said first, second, third or fourth data sets into said database;

storing a first association between said first image and at least one said first, second, third or fourth data sets into said database;

storing information representing a route into said database, where said parcel is delivered in association with said route;

storing a route association between said first image and said route into said database;

storing information representing a driver into said database, where said parcel is delivered in association with said driver;

storing a driver association between said first image and said driver into said database.

13. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 12, including the step of displaying an image including said first image and at least one of said first, second, third or fourth data sets.

14. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 12, including the step of printing an image including said first image and at least one of said first, second, third or fourth data sets.
15. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 12, where said first image and at least one of said first, second, third or fourth data sets are stored as a record in said database.
16. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 12, where at least one of said first, route and driver associations are stored as links within said database.
17. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 12, where at least one of said bar code, said OCR-A or OCR-B characters, said text characters or said signature is stored as a second image.
18. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 16, where an association between said second image and said first data set is stored as a link within said database.
19. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 16, where an association between said second image and said second data set is stored as a link within said database.
20. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 16, where an association between said second image and said third data set is stored as a link within said database.
21. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 16, where an association between said second image and said fourth data set is stored as a link within said database.
22. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein said first color image and said second color image correspond to different views of said item.

23. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein said item is a package for delivery.
24. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein said method includes the step of using a common optical reader to capture said first color image and said second color image.
25. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein said method includes the step of using a common optical reader to capture said first color image, said second color image and to decode said optical indicia.
26. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein said associating step includes the step of associating said first color image with said second color image.
27. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein said associating step includes the step of associating said first color image and said decoded data.
28. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein said associating step includes the step of associating said first color image with said second color image and said decoded data.
29. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein said method includes the step of using a common optical reader to capture said first color image, said second color image and to decode said optical indicia, the method further including the steps of providing on said optical reader an actuator for actuating an association mode and actuating said actuator to activate said association mode.
30. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein said method further includes the step of counting a number of color images that have been captured.

31. (Previously Presented) An optical reader for use in managing mail/item parcel delivery, the optical reader comprising:

a color imaging assembly for capturing color images;

a user interface having an actuator for activating an association mode of operation in which color images captured by said optical reader can be associated to one another;

a counter for counting a number of color images that have been captured by said optical reader after activation of said association mode;

wherein said optical reader is configured so that when said association mode is activated said optical reader associates first and second color images captured by said optical reader without requesting a user to designate whether said first and second color images should be associated; and

wherein said optical reader is further configured so that when a third color image is captured by said optical reader after activation of said association mode said optical reader requests a user to designate whether said third color image should be associated with said first and second color images.

32. (Currently Amended) The optical reader of claim 31, wherein said optical reader is configured so that if said second color image includes a representation of an optical indicia said optical reader decodes said optical ~~reader~~ indicia and associates decodes data resulting from said decoding to said first color image.